

FACULTY SENATE RESOLUTION
FSR 2002/2003—05

I. PROPOSAL NAME:

Abolition of the Student Assessment of Teaching Effectiveness in the Tenure, Promotion, and Post-Tenure Review Process

II. STATED PROPOSAL:

The Faculty Senate proposes abandonment of the Student Assessment of Teaching Effectiveness instrument and that it cease being incorporated by any College or department within any College for the purposes of judging teaching effectiveness or established as a measure of the Teaching component in the faculty review process for Promotion, Tenure, Pre-Tenure, Post-Tenure, or any other evaluative review process.

III. JUSTIFICATION:

The original purpose of this assessment tool had been designed to assist faculty members in their self-improvement efforts. As such, its inherent substantive and procedural flaws were easily overlooked in favor of acquiring a sense of student acceptance or rejection of instructional methodologies and creativity. Professors, then, were able to try new approaches and techniques and to have a tool for evaluating their approaches to the learning process.

This original purpose and intent for creating and revising the assessment tool has since been abandoned in favor of employing the tool for the Promotion, Tenure, Pre-Tenure, Post-Tenure, and other evaluative review processes. The Faculty Senate is not opposed to the creation of a tool that allows students to respond and have input into the process of evaluating a professor's procedural policies and implementations, but it finds student assessments of teaching effectiveness invalid and inappropriate, and that it certainly should cease being employed as a gateway to professional advancement.

The Senate does not stand alone in this proposal or in its evaluation of student assessment of instructional effectiveness. The President of the Student Government Association and the Student Assessment Task Force are in agreement that the Student Assessment of Instructional Effectiveness instrument is ineffective as an accurate or substantively accurate measuring tool, and that revisions of it as such may increase its accuracy, but never to the level of establishing it as an instrument worthy of being incorporated into the Promotion, Tenure, Pre-Tenure, Post-Tenure, or any other evaluative review process.

At best, student assessments of instructional effectiveness reflect attitudes rather than effectiveness, for it does not measure quantifiable criteria. As it currently stands, faculty members can easily be seriously handicapped in the Promotion, Tenure, Pre-Tenure, Post-Tenure and other evaluative processes if their average scores on student evaluations of instructional effectiveness do not meet the threshold. This, joined with the innate inaccuracy and unscholarly nature of student assessment of instructional effectiveness, precludes the incorporation of such an instrument in any process so vital to the

professional standing of our highly professional faculty and of the professional integrity of the University.

IV. BUDGET IMPLICATIONS:

There will be no added expenses incurred for terminating this instrument and for removing its incorporation into the Tenure, Promotion and Post-Tenure, and other evaluative review processes. There may be no savings to result from this process either, as the University should, perhaps through the Student Assessment Task Force, discover another instrument for student input into measuring the conduct of teaching. The Senate contends that the University has or can easily develop other, more accurate evaluation instrumentalities for measuring the effectiveness of teaching.

V. SUBMITTED BY:

Jere W. Roberson, Senator and Primary Author